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Elster's work impresses one as a scrap-book of a vast amount of detached facts and isolated theories, Lacombe's one aim appears to be to reduce a limited number of observations to a rational whole.

Truly delightful reading is the chapter devoted to the psychological analysis of the artistic temper, the unravelling of the mysterious threads that connect the artist's work with his own personality, from the instinctive impulse for production to the conscious striving for definite effects, from unquestioning acceptance of the common modes of thought and feeling to uncompromising assertion of the artistic self. Masterly is the logical analysis of the complexity of causes that produce a given literary phenomenon such as the growth and decay of certain branches of poetry, of certain intellectual and emotional movements; and equally masterly is the way in which this analysis is applied to concrete historical examples, as for instance the development of classical French tragedy. Penetrating and true is the criticism of Taine's failure to explain the relation of the individual to the surrounding *milieu*, of Brunetière's brilliant but futile play with general terms such as *esprit anglais* or *moyen âge*. And full of significance is M. Lacombe's conception of the individual as "un événement qui porte en lui des traces d'institutions antérieures et qui est le point de départ d'institutions subséquentes." It is a pity that the author should not have made this conception the guiding principle of his discussion of literary progress. By tracing in detail the line of development formed by the constant interweaving of individual with institutional forces he would have deepened our insight into the causes that control the growth of a given literature a great deal more than by his interesting attempt to demonstrate the tendency of advancing civilization to increase the mastery over literary form and to heighten the capacity for poetic representation of a complex inner life.

Perhaps the most felicitous part of the whole book consists in the numerous characterizations of individual authors such as Racine, Rousseau, Voltaire, Byron, Chateaubriand, Hugo, Renan, every one of these sketches being used as illustration of some general principle. The very quality which seems to debar M. Lacombe from divinatory appreciation of poetry—his intensely analytic and rational temper—makes him a most fair-minded and unprejudiced interpreter of human nature.

KUNO FRANCKE.

La Philosophie Sociale du XVIII^e Siècle et la Révolution. Par ALFRED ESPINAS, Professor à l'Université de Bordeaux. (Paris: Félix Alcan. 1898. Pp. 413.)

THIS is a volume of lectures, several of them the opening lectures of annual courses delivered at Paris under the auspices of the Faculty of Letters. The author gives them in their original form, even to the extent of preserving the polite "Messieurs" at the outset of each. One feels hesitant in offering a critical judgment of them, conscious that in those to which they served as an introduction the positions here defended

may have been more clearly defined. The only subject fully treated is the conspiracy of Babeuf, to which half the volume is devoted.

The volume opens with a discussion, from the psychological point of view, of the instinctive tendencies or activities of man in society. This is followed by a theory of social crises, an explanation of the social philosophy of the eighteenth century, and an argument to prove that the Revolution was essentially socialistic. The lectures on Babeuf complete the demonstration of the thesis which gives unity to the whole.

This thesis states that socialism was "un des facteurs de la Révolution française, dont la conspiration de 1796 est l'épilogue naturel." Babeuf is no bizarre revolutionary curiosity, therefore, he "continue et achève Robespierre." Support for this thesis is not sought in new documents, but in a new interpretation of documents already published.

M. Espinas acknowledges that the Revolution did result in the consolidation of individual property, and that at the distance of a century it does not seem to us particularly socialistic. But this was due, he thinks, to a stupid popular error, which arose after Bonaparte had declared there were to be no more readjustments of property rights, and which transformed the constitutional right of every man to *some* property, into a right to defend the property he had already acquired. And so arose the "legend of the good, the beneficent Revolution, the founder of individual property," a legend which even economists like Dupont de Nemours were not ashamed to strengthen because of the prestige the Revolution still possessed.

The author looks back upon the years between 1789 and 1795 as a time when the dreamer, the mischief-maker, and the spoiler, had control, and were actually retarding the progress of reform.

His pages give evidence of a careful examination of those debates, in the three assemblies, which bore upon the theory of property or which resulted in some modification of existing property rights. His defect, if defect there be—and those who take his point of view may observe no defect—is in his interpretation of Revolutionary utterances. For example he does not sufficiently distinguish between pious opinions on the welfare of society which the sentimental politicians of that day loved to express in the ardors of controversy, and measures which they embodied in legislation and which they actually carried out. Merely because they denounced riches as a source of corruption, and pictured some idyllic state of equality as the ideal toward which the legislator should work, we are not to infer that they had any serious intention to abolish riches or promote communism. Even Robespierre, more inclined than most others to hark back to principles, declared emphatically, in the debate on the declaration of rights, April 24, 1793, that equality of goods was a chimera, and added that it was even less necessary to private happiness than it was to the public welfare.

The author believes that the men of the Constituent were influenced by socialistic ideas to nearly the same degree as the Jacobins of 1793. Had this been the case one would suppose that they would have used the

church lands to some better purpose than in immensely strengthening the cause of private property by increasing the number of individual holdings. Even M. Espinas is not unconscious of the difficulties of his thesis at this point, for he remarks, paradoxically, "le socialisme d'État était l'instrument avec lequel les derniers vestiges du communisme du moyen âge étaient effacés." Doubtless the way in which feudal rights were confiscated, and the lands of the church taken over by the state, constituted a serious attack upon property, just such an attack as convinced socialists might have made; nevertheless it must be remembered: first, that the impulse to the acts of August 4th, and of the succeeding weeks, came originally from attempts on the part of peasant proprietors to rid their lands of what seemed to them antiquated and unjust encumbrances; and secondly, that the secularization of the church lands had several aspects besides that of an act of socialistic expropriation; it was a financial expedient, a way of satisfying the land hunger of the peasantry, and a means of binding a host of new proprietors to the cause of the Revolution. Furthermore the whole was but the climax of tendencies which had been asserting themselves in French legislation ever since the feudal system had passed the zenith of its power.

When the author gets beyond the period of the Constituent he does not distinguish clearly between currents of opinion, and is inclined to use "Revolution" and "Robespierre" as interchangeable terms. The miscellaneous way in which he quotes them, regardless of what they stood for, would certainly convey a wrong impression to persons not tolerably familiar with the affiliations of such men as Chabot, Fouché and Joseph Le Bon.

Again he fails to make enough allowance for utterances suggested by no well-conceived theory of society, but suited rather to humor the bitter disappointments of the *sansculottes*; indeed the language of envy "lean with seeing others eat." Passions of this sort are often calmed by a little smashing of the social furniture.

But even if it be fair to use "Revolution" and "Robespierre" as synonyms, the author's interpretation of Robespierre is sometimes misleading. Take Robespierre's position on the freedom of bequest as an example. According to M. Espinas he was uncompromisingly opposed to granting any such privilege. And yet Robespierre says in the very speech from which M. Espinas quotes that he is in favor of pursuing a middle course, between the practice of those countries which grant unlimited liberty of disposing of property by bequest and that of those others where no such privileges are permitted. He thought the citizen could safely be allowed to will a portion of his property, provided the right were not used to perpetuate "cette trop grande inégalité des fortunes," which it should be the duty of the legislator to destroy.

Once more, where the argument concerns the right to work, which in the case of the feeble and the aged becomes the right to receive support, Robespierre and others are represented as holding that the larger portion of all property must be considered a reserve fund, to satisfy these claims.

Such an interpretation cannot fairly be put upon the words used in the debates. Neither did Robespierre argue that men who possessed property greater in amount than any individual's share in the common fund ought to be prosecuted as monopolists.

In the description of the conspiracy of Babeuf the attempt to create the impression that this ridiculous adventurer was a real continuator of Robespierre breaks down. He was a travesty, hardly more. And it is doubtful whether the ex-Jacobins, who allied themselves with him in their desire to restore the constitution of 1793, would have listened to his declamations if the victory had been won.

It is difficult to escape the conclusion that writers like M. Espinas are influenced in their interpretations by a subtle desire to discredit every phase of the Revolution. This comes from the unhappy fact that in France the Revolution is still "in politics."

HENRY E. BOURNE.

Pitt: Some Chapters of his Life and Times. By the Right Hon. EDWARD GIBSON, Lord ASHBOURNE. (London, New York, and Bombay: Longmans, Green, and Co. 1898. Pp. xiv, 395.)

THIS work is rightly named "some chapters" in the life of Pitt. It is not a Life. The writer, Lord Ashbourne, the Chancellor of Ireland, has been a leading politician and is well qualified to give an opinion on any point of political history, especially when it relates, as the greater part of this volume does, to Irish affairs.

Pitt is a singular instance of a youth distinctly training himself for politics and turning out, without practical experience, a great politician. He went to Cambridge at fourteen and stayed there till he was twenty-one, leading a very studious and, during the earlier years, rather recluse life. Then entering Parliament, he at once took his place among the leaders; at twenty-three was a cabinet minister; and in his twenty-fifth year became prime minister and master of the House of Commons. He enjoyed the great heritage of his father's popularity, and he had been carefully trained by his father as a speaker. Curiously enough, he turned out the opposite of his father both as a statesman and as an orator. Chatham avowed himself a lover of honorable war; his glory was entirely warlike. He knew and cared little about economy or finance, and not much about general administration. His son was a disciple of Adam Smith, a financier, an economist, a lover of peace as the necessary condition of economical reform, and devoid of genius as a war minister. In his style of oratory also the pupil, though a success in his way, was the very opposite of his teacher. Chatham's style was in the highest degree original and electric. That of Pitt was in the strictest sense parliamentary. If any one wants to know what the perfection of British parliamentary eloquence is, let him read Pitt's speech of February 3, 1800, on the French overtures for peace. Fox's speech in reply, delivered immediately after Pitt had sat down, has been cited as a miracle of extem-